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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Canceled).

Claim 2 (Previously Presented) A method of welding a plurality of base materials to each other with an intermetallic compound, comprising the steps of:

piling up a first substance in powdery form or molten form on the base materials, and  
delivering a second substance in powdery form or molten form onto the first substance,

the second substance reacted with the first substance to thereby cause the plurality of base materials to be bonded to each other through a coating layer of an intermetallic compound, and

at least one of the first substance and the second substance is in molten form,  
and wherein each of the first substance and the second substance comprises at least one metal.

Claims 3-11 (Canceled).

Claim 12 (Original): A method of preparing a three-dimensional molding with the use of a computerized control system, comprising the steps of:

piling up a portion of first substance on a base material, and delivering a portion of second substance onto the piled first substance to thereby form a layer of intermetallic compound; and

piling up another portion of first substance on the intermetallic compound layer, and delivering another portion of second substance onto the piled first substance to thereby form another layer of intermetallic compound.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first substance is in powdery form or molten form and additionally contains a powdery or fibrous ceramic comprising an oxide, carbide, nitride or boride of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of aluminum, yttrium, titanium, zirconium, hafnium and silicon.

Claim 15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said coating layer of an intermetallic compound is fused to the base materials.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first substance comprises at least one metal selected from the group consisting of nickel, cobalt, iron, niobium, vanadium, molybdenum, tungsten, chromium and tantalum.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the second substance comprises at least one metal selected from the group consisting of aluminum and titanium.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the base materials independently comprise a substance which is a metal or alloy of at least one member selected from the group consisting of iron, nickel, cobalt, aluminum and niobium.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the base materials independently comprise a substance which is at least one metal selected from the group consisting of metals of the first substance, metals other than metals of the first substance but in the same group thereof of the periodic table, metals of the second substance, and metals other than metals of the second substance but in the same group thereof of the periodic table.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first substance additionally contains a ceramic.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein a coating layer comprising an intermetallic compound, an intermetallic compound having a ceramic dispersed therein, or an intermetallic compound containing a nitride is formed by the reaction between the first substance and the second substance.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claims 1, 3-7, 9-11, 13 and 15 have been canceled.

No new matter has been added by the above amendment. With entry thereof, Claims 2, 12, 14 and 16-22 will be pending in the application.